

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7121

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4986

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, IS, XF

SUBJECT: DAYAN ON NEGOTIATIONS

1. DURING A CALL BY SENATOR DOLE AND THE AMBASSADOR JULY 6, FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS HIS EXPECTATIONS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND HIS HOPES FOR NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT BEGIN HAS THE REPUTATION OF A HARDLINER AND OF BEING INFLEXIBLE; IN FACT HE IS VERY CONSTRUCTIVE AND HAS DECIDED TO DO WHATEVER HE CAN TO INITIATE AND TO CARRY OUT MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. HE IS NOT SIMPLY TRYING TO STALL OR BUY TIME. DAYAN SAID THAT HE WAS NOT SURE OF THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BUT HE IS SURE THAT BEGIN IS APPROACHING THEM WITH GOOD WILL, AMBITION AND THE INTENT TO BE BUSINESSLIKE.

2. HE THEN REVIEWED, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM
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THE SENATOR, THE REASONS WHY HE BELIEVED THAT NOW IS THE BEST OPPORTUNITY IN 30 YEARS TO MOVE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS. FIRST, HE SAID, ISRAEL KEPT ALL THE TERRITORIES IT OCCUPIED IN 1967. THIS MEANS THAT ISRAEL NOW HAS ONLY TO GIVE, NOT SEEK, TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS AND THEREFORE IS IN A GOOD POSITION TO BE FORTHCOMING.

3. SECOND, ISRAEL AND THE WEST BANK PALESTINIANS HAVE MANAGED TO LIVE TOGETHER FOR TEN YEARS. THE ARABS KNOW THAT IF NO AGREEMENT IS REACHED, THE OCCUPATION OF THE WEST BANK CAN GO ON AS IT NOW EXISTS. BECAUSE ISRAEL HAS, BY AND LARGE, MANAGED TO LIVE WITH THE PALESTINIANS WITHOUT RIOTS, DEMONSTRATIONS, ETC., THERE IS NO PRESSURE TO MAKE ANY CHANGE. ISRAEL CAN SAY TO THE ARABS: IF THERE IS AN AGREEMENT, GOOD; IF THERE IS NO AGREEMENT, THE PRESENT STATUS QUO CAN CONTINUE, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT THE FINAL NOR THE PERFECT ANSWER.

4. THE THIRD POINT IS THAT THE ARABS PREPARED FOR THE 1973 WAR FOR SEVEN YEARS, WITH HEAVY INVESTMENT IN ARMAMENT. IN SPITE OF THAT INVESTMENT AND IN SPITE OF THE SURPRISE WHICH THEY ACHIEVED, THE WAR ENDED WITH THE IDF CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE TO CAIRO AND DAMASCUS. THE ARABS KNOW THEY CANNOT REPEAT 1973 - NEITHER THE INVESTMENT NOR THE SURPRISE THEY ATTAINED. THEREFORE, THEY MUST ASK THEMSELVES: IF THEIR BEST EFFORT SUCCEEDED ONLY IN BRINGING THE IDF CLOSER THAN EVER TO THEIR CAPITALS, WHO GO TO WAR AGAIN? WHY NOT NEGOTIATE? HE NOTED THAT AFTER 1967, WHEN ISRAEL HAD ITS GREATEST VICTORY, ISRAEL HAD SUGGESTED RETURNING THE SINAI AND THE GOLAN. AFTER THE 1973 WAR WITH LESS OF A VICTORY, ISRAEL MADE NO OFFER OF RETURN OF TERRITORIES. HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE ARABS NOW SAY THEY ARE READY FOR PEACE.

5. DAYAN CONCLUDED BY REPEATING THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION CAN CONTINUE WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT, BUT IF THERE IS NO AGREEMENT THE TERRITORIES STAY UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL. THERE HAVE BEEN MAJOR CHANGES AMONG THE ARAB LEADERSHIP; HAVING NEGOTIATED WITH THE ARABS IN 1948, 1957, 1967 AND 1973, HE HAS SEEN THESE CHANGES AND IS CONVINCED THIS MAY BE THE LAST CHANCE, AND ISRAEL'S BEST CHANCE, FOR A SETTLEMENT. THE PROBLEMS ARE COMPLICATED BUT THEY CAN BE SETTLED AND IT SHOULD BE DONE NOW.

6. COMMENT: WHILE HE WAS OSTENSIBLY ANSWERING SENATOR DOLE'S QUESTION ABOUT THE REASONS HE CONSIDERED THE TIME RIPE FOR NEGOTIATIONS, DAYAN, IN FACT, APPEARED TO BE SETTING OUT THE REASONS HE BELIEVES ISRAEL WILL BE NEGOTIATING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH. END COMMENT.

7. THIS MESSAGE HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED WITH SENATOR DOLE. LEWIS

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